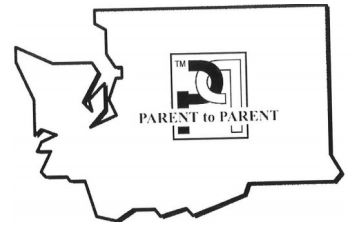


Island County Parent to Parent Newsletter



Great Ideas to Get Out and Be Safe Disability Passes Available

Accessing Washington's Outdoors for Persons with Disabilities www.wdfw.wa.gov/accessibility/

Washington State is recognized for its wide array of outdoor recreational activities and wildlife. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) encourages all persons with a disability to experience recreation in Washington's wonderful outdoors. Numerous opportunities are offered for hunters and anglers with disabilities through legislative mandates, statutes, and policies complying with provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). **Here is a comprehensive list of Accessible Outdoor Adventures on Whidbey and Camano Islands: ADA Compliant. Great for people with mobility challenges and apparatuses, Strollers, Bikes, etc.** <https://whidbeycamanoislands.com/accessible-outdoor-adventures-on-whidbey-and-camano-islands/>



Washington State Park Discover Pass

<http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov/131/Exemptions>

Disability placards or license plates- The Department of Licensing issues Washington state disability permits and license plates, and holders of these are exempt from needing the Discover Pass on State Parks lands. Holders of these permits and plates will need the Discover Pass to access lands managed by WDFW and DNR. Free WA State Park Days offered throughout the year.

Fishing Licenses www.fishhunt.dfw.wa.gov/wdfw/disability_apps.html

The following are eligible for a combination fishing license (fresh water, salt water, and shellfish) and/or hunting license at a discounted rate. Resident who permanently uses a wheelchair as certified by the doctor, blind or visually impaired, developmental disability as determined by DSHS authority or physicians signature.

National Parks and Federal Recreational

Lands Pass www.nps.gov/findapark/passes.htm

Access Pass for free admission to National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands for U. S. Citizens or permanent residents with permanent disabilities The pass may be obtained in person at a federal recreation site or through the mail. Due to COVID 19 obtaining passes in person may not available right now.

⇒ Island Transit offers free transportation to most of the accessible trails and beaches in Island County. Check out their schedule and routes to find out more (360)678-7771 <https://www.islandtransit.org/>
Masks are required on Island Transit buses.



Behind every great kid is a parent who sometimes has no idea what they are doing, and are flying by the seat of their pants; just hoping that they haven't messed things up too badly. Don't worry that you're not perfect. The fact that you are worried just goes to show that you really are a good parent. After all if you weren't, you wouldn't care, would you?

FB/AspieMom/Adventures in Autismland ©

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Want to know more about Parent to Parent? Check out our website and Facebook page.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Humanservices/Pages/Parent-to-Parent.aspx> [Various Resource Guides](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent>

(360)632-7539 Call/text




Ready, Set, KNOW...



Earned Income Tax Credit

If you are a taxpayer with a disability, or have a child with a disability, you may qualify for a refund that puts extra dollars in your pocket.

Life's a little easier with  **eitc**
earned income tax credit

The IRS estimates that as many as 1.5 million people with disabilities miss out on a valuable credit for low to moderate income workers because they fail to file a tax return.

Many of these non-filers fall below the income threshold requiring them to file; however, in order to claim the EITC, you have to file a tax return—even if you don't owe taxes for the previous year.

Those who qualify could pay less federal tax, pay no tax at all or even get a tax refund that puts an extra \$2 to \$6,660 into their pocket.

Eligibility for EITC

To qualify for EITC, you must have earned income from employment, self-employment or another source that does not exceed income limits (see chart on the right) as well as meet a few additional criteria explained at www.irs.gov/eitc. Social Security benefits or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) do not count as earned income.

Disability and EITC

Taxpayers may claim a child* of any age as a qualifying child if the person has a permanent disability and you both meet all other EITC requirements. The tax law definition of totally and permanently disabled is:

- ⚙ The person cannot engage in any substantial gainful activity because of a physical or mental condition.
- ⚙ A doctor determines the condition has lasted or the doctor expects it to last continuously for at
- ⚙ least a year or lead to death.

*child: son, daughter, adopted child, stepchild, foster child or a descendant of any of them such as a grandchild; brother, sister, half brother, half sister, step brother, step sister or a descendant of any of them such as a niece or nephew.

EITC and Public Benefit Programs

The law is clear that tax refunds, including refunds from tax credits such as the EITC, are not counted as income for purposes of determining eligibility for benefits (such as Social Security disability benefits, Medicaid, and food assistance programs). This applies to any federal program and any state or local program financed with federal funds.

Use the EITC Assistant at irs.gov/eitc to determine eligibility and estimate the amount of your credit.



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAD MORE MONEY?

Income Limits for Tax Year 2020:

- ⚙ \$50,954 (\$56,844 married, filing jointly) with three or more qualifying children
- ⚙ \$47,440 (\$53,330 married, filing jointly) with two qualifying children
- ⚙ \$41,756 (\$47,646 married, filing jointly) with one qualifying child
- ⚙ \$15,820 (\$21,710 married, filing jointly) with no qualifying children

Investment income must be \$3,650 or less for the year.

Maximum Credit Amounts:

- ⚙ \$6,660 with three or more qualifying children
- ⚙ \$5,920 with two qualifying children
- ⚙ \$3,584 with one qualifying child
- ⚙ \$538 with no qualifying children

Remember: To claim EITC, you must file a tax return even if you owe no tax.

Find out if you qualify for EITC. Ask your tax return preparer or visit: irs.gov/eitc.

A Message from the Washington State Fathers Network



The Washington State Fathers Network has been around since 1978 providing **support, resources and connections for men** who have a child with special health care needs in their life. No matter where you live in Washington, we invite you to join us. There are multiple ways to be involved, from following our Facebook page or being on our mailing list to taking part in or leading chapter meetings. You can be involved in whatever way is comfortable for you.

Our work is focused in three areas:

- Connecting men to each other and to resources and information that are of help to them and their families.
 - o The connections can happen on a one to one basis, in a group setting or during social activities (some just for men, others that are family oriented). Due to the pandemic our social activities have stopped, and group meetings are done virtually. But, the benefit of virtual meetings is that you can connect with other men no matter where you live.

Information and resources can be obtained in several ways. One way is by contacting me, Louis Mendoza, directly. Information and resources can also be found on the resources page of our website and on our Facebook page which can be found by searching for Washington State Fathers Network. And, for those on our mailing list, a list of group meeting times and newly found resources is sent out twice a month.

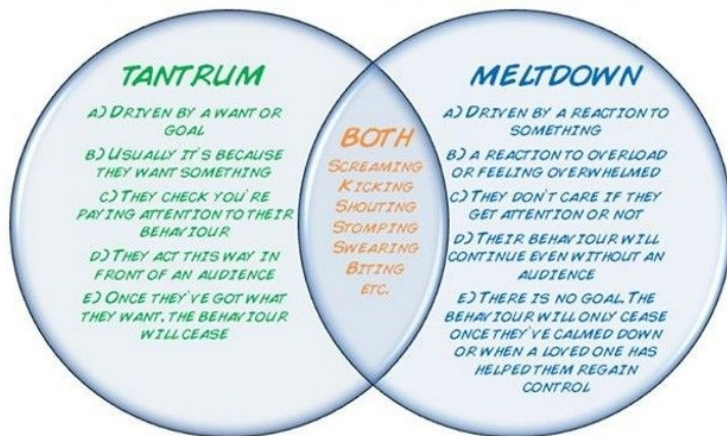
- o Raising the voices of men. We feel that it's important that men be heard regarding the joys and challenges that come with having a special needs child in your life. So, we look for opportunities for that to happen including at conferences, on panels and on podcasts. As part of that effort, we offer a training program (for men and women) called Telling Your Story with a Purpose.

Advocating for equal access to the community for everyone. This is so that organizations like YMCAs, Girl Scouts, theatres and museums keep in mind that the special needs community needs to feel welcome and included.

I hope you'll consider joining our Network. If you'd like to know more or have questions contact me, louis.mendoza@kinderling.org or 425-653-4286.

Island County chapter coordinator is Mike Etzell (360)678-7883
mikeet@islandcountywa.gov

TANTRUM VS MELTDOWN



Life has changed quite drastically in the last year, and so have behaviors.

Distance learning, fewer opportunities to socialize, new routines, different responsibilities and challenges. No kiddo can “keep it together” all day long. We all need breaks. We all get overwhelmed.

Knowing the triggers and seeing the “ramp up” is key to success. Knowing the difference between Tantrum and Meltdown can help everyone involved. Understanding Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) and whether you or your child may have traits can be helpful too.

Here's how to tell the difference between a tantrum and meltdown.

Your child is upset and frustrated, and seems to be acting out. Are you seeing a tantrum or a meltdown? Lots of people use these words interchangeably. But even though they may look similar, tantrums and meltdowns are different.

And how you handle them depends on which it is.

	Tantrum	Meltdown
What Is It?	An angry or frustrated outburst. Kids might yell, cry, lash out, and hold their breath. Kids typically have some control over their behavior during a tantrum. A tantrum tends to stop when kids get what they want, get out of what they don't want to do, or when they give up. (But tan-	A reaction to feeling overwhelmed. Kids might yell, cry, lash out, run away, and/or shut down and withdraw. Meltdowns are a full-body reaction that are out of kids' control. A meltdown tends to stop when kids wear themselves out or when there's a change in their surrounding or what they're experiencing.
What Triggers It?	A desire to get something, avoid something, or get a reaction from someone. Frustration. Not being able to communicate needs and wants.	Overload. That can be an overload of emotions, information, or sensory overload. Intense frustration. Sudden changes in routine or expectations. Not being able to communicate needs and wants
Signs You may Notice	You know what your child wants or is reacting to. Kids having tantrums may also: Pay attention to what's going on around them. Watch how people react and change their behavior to match it. Try to bargain for a solution while yelling. Stop the tantrum once they get what they want or realize they won't get what they want by acting out.	You may not know what your child wants or is reacting to. Kids having meltdowns may also: Not seem to have control over what they're doing and look panicked. Shut down or try to escape. Not process what's going on around them. Not respond to what people say or how they react. Lose their ability to problem-solve and negotiate. Need time to calm down and recover once the meltdown ends.

Knowing your child's triggers can help you avoid or defuse a meltdown or tantrum. It also helps you be more empathetic and understanding. Find ways to help kids deal with frustration and learn to cope.

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-thinking-differences/child-learning-disabilities/sensory-processing-issues/compare-the-signs-how-to-tell-a-tantrum-from-a-meltdown> by Amanda Morin

Are you (or your child) experiencing Sensory Processing Disorder SPD?

Did you know that Occupational Therapy (OT) may be able to help?

THE SEVEN SENSORY SYSTEMS

PROPRIOCEPTION VESTIBULAR TACTILE AUDITORY VISUAL GUSTATORY OLFACTORY



TYPE OF INPUT	SENSORY MODULATION-OVERRESPONSIVE	SENSORY MODULATION-UNDERRESPONSIVE	SENSORY MODULATION-CRAVING	SENSORY DISCRIMINATION
TACTILE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids touching messy textures, such as shaving cream Rigid with types of clothing worn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not notice when hands are messy Does not notice when clothes are twisted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeks out experiences to touch things Constantly fidgets with an object 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constantly runs hands through a certain texture Puts non-food objects in mouth
VISUAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids being in a room with bright lights Difficulty focusing on a busy/disordered picture, such as "I Spy" images 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complains eyes are tired when looking at a book Difficulty focusing on a still image 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stands in front of the mirror or reflective surfaces for long periods of time Spins wheels, fans (or self) and intently watches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confuses the letters "d" and "b" frequently Difficulty finding a specified object in a busy/complex picture
AUDITORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers ears in noisy environments Makes noises to drown out other loud noises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not respond to name being called 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests music that is fast and/or loud Makes noises in quiet environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has a hard time differentiating words: "think" vs. "thing" Poor ability to adjust the volume of voice
PROPRIO-CEPTIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unable to sit for long periods of time due to discomfort Avoids jumping or bouncing activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slouches when sitting in a chair or on the floor Sits in one position for long periods of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seems to always be jumping or bouncing Crashes into couch cushions or bed mattress at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Falls or bumps into objects Does not use the right amount of force to push/pull/grasp
VESTIBU-LAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refuses the swing, slide, and spinning Anxious when climbing or when feet leave the ground 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not get dizzy when spinning "Wakes up" with intense movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys climbing or jumping from tall heights Constantly spinning, climbing, rolling, running, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not adjusting posture when on a swing to prevent falling off Trips when walking up the stairs or falls when climbing
TASTE/SMELL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eats limited number of food textures Eats bland foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefers tangy, spicy, sour food Doesn't seem to notice foul odors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overstuffs mouth Smells perfumes/colognes on other people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overstuffs mouth Prefers foods that are one consistent texture (i.e. not mixed)

Sensory input pervades our everyday lives. It is how we make sense of the world and interact with the world around us. It is how we learn new skills and participate in play, school, work, and self-care. We have 7 different sensory systems that our brain must integrate in order to interact appropriately with our environment. These sensory systems include: proprioception (muscle-joint awareness), vestibular (orientation in space), tactile (touch), auditory (sound), visual (sight), gustatory (taste), and olfactory (smell). Our brain works hard to integrate all of those sensations without becoming too overwhelmed, distracted, or disengaged. Dr. Jamie Chaves, a pediatric occupational therapist at The Center for Connection in Pasadena, California,

For more information and the full article,

<https://momentousinstitute.org/blog/making-sense-of-sensory-processing?>

Ideas for Sensory Activities

Yoga – There are a lot of benefits to yoga for everyone. Just a few minutes a day of practice can really make a difference.

Martial Arts – A wonderful blend of strength, routine and calmness.

Archery – You will never be as aware of your breath as when you are staring down an arrow at a target. It requires strength, stability and great body awareness.

Horse Back Riding – Working with horses requires a person to be calm and focused, it also requires a lot of heavy work with feeding, grooming, mucking and more. Lots of great sensory inputs.

Swimming – The pressure of the water can be very calming and soothing to a lot of people. It is also great for fitness.

Trampoline – Just like for little kids, getting onto a trampoline can be great for sensory processing issues. Plus it's fun!

Parkour/Obstacle/Ninja Training – Any American Ninja Warrior fans out there? Training for those kinds of obstacle activities is fantastic for getting lots of coordination, strength building and sensory inputs. We made our own temporary course out of tires and it was fantastic fun.

Music – Whether you are singing or beating on the drums or strumming a guitar, there is something very natural and instinctive in the human reaction to music. The creation of rhythms and melodies has a quality that connects deeply with many people.

Dance – Dance is a wonderful way to get sensory inputs, body awareness, strength, coordination and it includes the benefit of music.

Gymnastics – Just like dance, trampoline and parkour, gymnastics is another wonderful sensory activity.

Pottery – Along with other forms of art, pottery is a fantastic way to work with textures. And working on a wheel? What a fantastic sensory experience!

Gardening – Working in the garden involves lots of wonderful textures, scents and other sensory inputs. It's also good physical activity and what a wonderful way to connect with nature.

Slime – OK that sounds strange, but kids of all ages, even your older kids, will love playing with this stuff. It's crazy addictive and fun. Plus, really quick and easy to make. Grab the instructions on how to make slime here.

These are just a few ideas for sensory activities that are suitable for the older child. In the end it's about finding what is right for each individual and sometimes that involves lots of trial and error. Also what doesn't work at one age, may be a great fit at a different age. In the end it's all about find what works and while you are at it, having lots of fun trying new things!

<https://www.steampoweredfamily.com/brains/sensory-activities-for-the-older-child/>

Island County Parent to Parent

Support & Resources for Special Needs

Families in Island County

Tiffany Wheeler-Thompson ,Coordinator

PO BOX 5000 Coupeville, WA 98239

(360)632-7539 call/text

t.wheeler-thompson@islandcountwa.gov

****Check us out on Facebook for up-to-date resources, information and activities ****

www.facebook.com/islandcountyparent2parent

We have resource guides on our website:

*Island County Parent to Parent Disability Resource Guide

*Parent to Parent Autism Resource Guide

*Island County Behavioral Health Resource Guide.

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/Humanservices/Pages/Parent-to-Parent.aspx>

